

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly,  
My name is Karell Rose and I am a resident of South Windsor CT. I am also a member of  
Uniting for a Safe Inclusive Community - Manchester (USIC).

I am writing in support of HB 6616 Expanding access to HUSKY up to age 26 regardless of  
immigration status. Every single CT resident deserves access to health care. We need to open  
access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age. Investment in healthcare  
coverage would provide Connecticut with a healthy economic and social future by having  
healthy thriving communities.

Access to healthcare is a basic human right. People in our community should not suffer from  
acute and chronic pain and disease without the ability to get treatment. We need healthcare for  
everyone from birth to the end of life. Access to preventative health care would save money in  
terms of healthcare costs including uncompensated care costs. Also it would save needless  
suffering and loss of human potential. No one should incur crippling debt related to healthcare  
or fear seeking treatment due to lack of affordability. The cost of simple medications when you  
are uninsured or underinsured is shocking. Sometimes the cost is hundreds of dollars to  
thousands of dollars. The brunt of those costs are thrust on those who can least afford it.  
Undocumented community members often do not have access or the finances for health  
insurance. Access to healthcare and good health is foundational for healthy thriving individuals  
and communities.

Our healthcare system does not want to handle patients without insurance because they are not  
profitable. Patients without insurance are often dismissed or hastily treated and pushed out the  
door. They are treated without empathy for their pain and suffering. No one deserves this kind of  
treatment, least of all our most vulnerable community members. When you are undocumented,  
seeking medical care for your child or yourself is risking exposure. There is fear of COVID  
infection, deportation, and further economic suffering when seeking medical care. It should not  
be this way.

As we face an uncertain future in terms of climate change and increased viral threats, a  
functional healthcare system with strong preventative health measures for the community is  
essential. Heart disease, cancer, Covid, accidents and stroke are the leading causes of death  
in CT. Many of these are preventable illnesses and deaths. These are preventable health care  
costs, loss of productivity, and loss of life. COVID 19 is able to spread and kill as a direct  
result of a weak and patchwork public health care system. It puts all our communities at risk. It  
is no coincidence that black and brown communities which struggle with access to healthcare  
were disproportionately infected and dying from COVID-19. Investment in preventative health  
care would be an investment in a better collective future. This is even more compelling in young  
people who can lose years of life from lack of access to care.

Everyone in our community should be able to seek necessary medical care without fear or  
hesitation. If you are uninsured and undocumented, the stress of worrying about your health  
compounds a socially precarious and vulnerable situation.

I support HB 6616 Expanding access to HUSKY up to age 26 regardless of immigration status  
and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. I also ask the committee to work  
towards opening access to all community members in CT regardless of age or status.

Thank you for your time.

Karell Rose